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July 26, 2007

The Honorable John Dingell  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2125 Rayburn Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1102 Longworth Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Dingell and Chairman Rangel:

Thank you for your leadership in authoring the Children's Health and Medicare Protection Act of 2007 (HR 3162). This legislation is a much needed and well-balanced step forward to providing quality, affordable health coverage for children, seniors and individuals with disabilities.

I also wanted to express my support for the inclusion of changes to improve the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit. As you may know, several of those provisions were included in my legislation, The Medicare Part D Improvement Act of 2007 (HR 2056). The overlap includes:

1. Working towards filling the 'donut hole' by allowing cost incurred through AIDS drug assistance programs and Indian Health services for providing prescription drugs to count toward the beneficiaries' annual out-of-pocket expenditures.
2. Allowing beneficiaries to change plans when the plan's formulary changes are harmful.
3. Better reaching those individuals who qualify for the low-income subsidies through modifying the asset test requirements.
4. Eliminating the late enrollment penalty for those who qualify for the low-income subsidy.

Clearly our health care system is broken, and this legislation provides a fix to many critical areas of need. The modifications to Medicare Part D will help ensure that seniors and individuals with disabilities can obtain the prescription medications they need without experiencing unfair penalties. I look forward to working with you as the CHAMP Act moves through the House.

Yours truly,

Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress